UNITED NATIONS

Framework Convention on Climate Change

Distr.
GENERAL

FCCC/SBSTA/1997/11
16 September 1997

Original: ENGLISH

SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE
Seventh session
Bonn, 20-29 October 1997
Item 7 of the provisional agenda

ROSTER OF EXPERTS: EXPERIENCE OF THE SECRETARIAT IN ITS USE

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1 - 5	2
	A. Mandate and scope of the note	1	2
	B. Background	2 - 4	2
	C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA)	5	3
II.	THE ROSTER	6 - 15	3
	A. Current roster	6 - 8	3
	B. Use of the roster	9 - 11	5
	C. Processes of invitation and conduct of meetings	12 - 15	6
III.	DISCUSSION	16 - 21	7

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Mandate and scope of the note

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), at its fifth session, requested the secretariat to produce a report on its experience in using the roster of experts, for its seventh session. This note responds to that request. It describes how the nominees were obtained, the use of the roster and the process of invitation. It also identifies several procedural issues that have affected the use of the roster at this early stage and provides a number of suggestions for improving the process. It should be noted that the roster has only been used for a few tasks. Therefore, the experience of the secretariat is limited. An accompanying document (FCCC/SBSTA/1997/INF.6) provides an overview of nominations to the roster.

B. Background

2. At its second session, the Conference of the Parties (COP), in its decision 7/CP.2,1/ requested the secretariat to expedite the preparation of reports on adaptation technology and the terms of transfer of technology and know-how conducive to mitigating and adapting to climate change, and, in preparing these reports, to draw on nominees with expertise in these fields from Parties. It further noted that such a roster of experts and its use in facilitating the work of the Convention secretariat should be evaluated by the SBSTA and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), taking into account the ongoing discussion on Intergovernmental Technical Advisory Panel(s) (ITAPs). The COP also requested the SBI to evaluate and report on the transfer of technologies being undertaken between Annex II Parties and other Parties, and to do so by drawing on a roster of experts as referred to above.

3. At its fourth session, the SBSTA noted that many methodological topics are complex issues that could benefit from the advice of experts. As in the case of technology and technology transfer, the SBSTA requested the secretariat to draw on nominees with expertise in these fields from Parties to provide advice on methodological issues and to consider, *inter alia,* the use of round tables, briefings and other means to facilitate understanding of methodological issues by Parties, particularly developing country Parties (FCCC/SBSTA/1996/20).

4. At its fifth session, the SBSTA recalled the need as expressed in decision 7/CP.2 to evaluate the use of the roster of experts in facilitating the work of the Convention secretariat, taking into account the ongoing discussion on ITAPs. It took note of the plans of the secretariat to make use of the roster for preparing reports on technology and technology

---

1/ For decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its second session, see document FCCC/CP/1996/15/Add.1.

transfer by, *inter alia*, the seventh session. It requested the secretariat to also prepare a report on its experience in using the roster, for the seventh session (FCCC/SBSTA/1997/4).

C. Possible action by the SBSTA

5. The SBSTA may wish to:

(a) Take note of this report as well as the information note on nominations to the roster and, where necessary, provide guidance to the secretariat on the use of the roster of experts;

(b) Recall its intention to expand the roster to include experts in the field of methodologies as provided for at its fourth session and, in so doing, urge the secretariat to seek additional nominees with methodological expertise from Parties, reflecting the priority areas in the work programme;

(c) Request Parties to review the information on the current roster and points of contacts, and to submit, as soon as possible, additional nominations to the secretariat, particularly of experts with backgrounds related to the economic and financial aspects of transfer of technology and know-how, such as bilateral aid programmes, multilateral lending, and private sector banking, and to nominate experts with the particular methodological expertise that would be sought by the secretariat; and

(d) Develop a recommendation for a draft decision regarding the roster of experts, to be adopted by COP 3 and, in accordance with the division of labour with the SBI, keep the SBI informed about such recommendation.

II. THE ROSTER

A. Current roster

6. In response to decision 7/CP.2, the secretariat sent on 22 August 1996 a letter to Parties requesting the nomination of experts to be included in a roster on technology transfer. The letter included guidance to the Parties concerning the nomination procedure and the criteria for inclusion. It included a list of over a hundred specific fields of expertise considered by the secretariat to be relevant to the assigned tasks. It also requested Parties to forward to the secretariat a curriculum vitae and an application form for each nominee. Subsequently, at its fifth and sixth sessions, the SBSTA invited Parties to forward additional nominees to the roster.

7. A preliminary list of nominees was made available to the Parties in a conference room paper during the fourth session of the SBSTA. An updated list on nominees and the points of contact for each Party is provided in FCCC/SBSTA/1997/INF.6.

8. The current roster contains 312 nominees[2] from 44 Parties of which 184 are fromAnnex I Parties[3] and 128 from non-Annex I Parties. The five most frequently represented fields of expertise in the present roster include the following:

	Number of experts
- Energy, technology and know-how	47
- Natural resources management	44
- Mitigation, planning and management	38
- Water resources management	27
- Environmental economics	24

B. Use of the roster

9. The secretariat has used the roster to obtain assistance with three reports, that is, on adaptation technologies, terms of transfer of technology and know-how, and technology information centres and networks. In order to do so, the secretariat convened three meetings as reported in documents FCCC/SB/1997/3 and FCCC/SB/1997/4. In the process of holdings these meetings, the secretariat used 15 nominated experts from non-Annex I Parties and six from Annex I Parties. In addition, four experts from international organizations participated. In one case, a meeting was held in conjunction with a meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in order to encourage co-ordination. The secretariat provided funding for participation by experts from eligible Parties in accordance with normal practice and the availability of resources.

10. The secretariat has sought advice from the experts on the broad direction of its work and on activities underway within national institutions and international organizations. It has also used the experts to review, via electronic means, technical papers on adaptation (TP/1997/3), temperature adjustments (TP/1997/4) and activities of Parties included in Annex II related to technology transfer (FCCC/SBSTA/1997/13). In so doing, it has sought to involve experts at other stages in the preparation of technical reports. In the future, the secretariat may seek to involve experts in other activities such as the preparation of draft material.

11. Because of the emphasis given to the methodological work programme in the budget for the next biennium (FCCC/SBI/1997/16 and FCCC/SBSTA/1997/6), the secretariat will, in the near future, seek nominees from governments with expertise reflecting the priorities for the programme as identified by the SBSTA.

---

[1] Nominees who have not provided a curriculum vitae or an application form have not been included. Also, two nominees did not specify their field of expertise. Therefore, only 310 nominees are listed in document FCCC/SBSTA/1997/INF.6.

[2] One Annex I Party nominated over 60 experts.

C. Processes of invitation and conduct of meetings

12. The meetings held by the secretariat were limited in size to encourage discussions, but also because of available resources. The goal was to have meetings with 10-12 participants. In selecting participants for meetings, the secretariat sought to balance scientific and technical expertise on the one hand, and regional experience on the other.

13. The invitation process for the meetings included the following:

(a) An identification of the objectives of the meeting;

(b) A review of the roster to identify experts with the required scientific and regional backgrounds;

(c) An inquiry via an informal letter/e-mail to the expert to determine his/her availability and interest;

(d) The issuance of a formal invitation, after availability and interest are confirmed;

(e) The transmittal of a letter to the nominating government to inform it of the invitation and to request financial support for travel, as necessary; and

(f) The provision of assistance with travel arrangements.

14. The agenda for each meeting was flexible. It was designed to meet the information needs of each report. However, two common elements were the election of a chairperson from among the experts and initial presentations by the experts.[4] The purpose of the first element was to emphasize the independent role of the experts vis-a-vis the secretariat, while the purpose of the second element was to ensure that each expert was given an opportunity to provide information based on his/her experience.

15. After each meeting, all participants received a draft copy of the meeting report for comments. The final meeting reports may be found in documents FCCC/SB/1997/3 and FCCC/SB/1997/4.

---

[4] In the case of the meeting on terms of transfer, the group decided that no chairperson was necessary due to the limited number of attendees.

III. DISCUSSION

16. The experience of the secretariat in using the roster has been positive except for the procedural issues listed below. In all cases, the participants demonstrated a high level of competence and a great deal of interest. They provided presentations that were well prepared and contributed thoughtfully to the discussions. The chairpersons also made special contributions by guiding the deliberations of the groups and ensuring that meeting reports were prepared for use by the secretariat.

17. The secretariat encountered three difficulties with the process of using experts.

18. First, it was difficult to ensure a balance among scientific and technical areas of expertise and regional experience in each specific meeting. The secretariat can only afford to issue a limited number of invitations because it is necessary to keep the size of its meetings rather small. If some invited experts are not able to attend a meeting at the last minute, it may be impossible to invite substitutes and the balance of a meeting can turn out to be different than anticipated. In the case of the meeting on terms of transfer, the secretariat has sought the participation, over the course of two and a half months, of 22 experts from 13 countries and four international organizations. Of these, 16 invitations were declined because of conflicting schedules or other factors, including acts of war, so that the secretariat had to reconsider the scientific and regional balance of the meeting. In the future, the secretariat will try to ensure adequate participation by issuing invitations earlier and, within the budgetary possibilities, by inviting several more experts than would be strictly necessary.

19. Second, the roster contains only a limited number of experts in some fields, particularly those related to the economic and financial aspects of transfer of technology. As the secretariat is requested to provide information on such topics in the future, it may be necessary to update the roster with additional nominees.[5]

20. Third, it was difficult to obtain sufficient participation of experts from Annex II Parties. One reason may be that the secretariat does not cover the travel expenses of such participants and another reason may be that experts often do not fully recognize the importance of their potential contribution. The secretariat will modify the invitation process identified in paragraph 13 so as to inform government contact points whenever an inquiry of availability is sent to the expert. This may enable countries, if necessary, to provide early support to the process, including considering the financing of travel.

21. Finally, the roster has many more nominees in some fields than the secretariat may be able to use in the next biennium. Parties should be aware that nominating experts may raise

---

[5] In a few cases, the review of the roster, as indicated under step (b) in paragraph 13, caused the secretariat to informally request additional nominees from national contact points.

expectations among them concerning their participation. Some experts may in the future be less willing to be on a roster, unless they are called upon to actively participate.

- - - - -